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July 21, 2004
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NE NPR-A Amendment Planning Team
Bureau of Land Management (930)
Alaska State Office
222 West 7th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599

To Whom It May Concern:

001
General

I am writing to comment on the BLM's proposed amendment to its oil and gas leasing plan for the northeastern National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. In particular I am concerned about the area around Teshekpuk Lake, which is one of the most unique and important wetlands in all of Alaska.

002
General

I urge you to adopt Alternative A, the No Action Alternative because it maintains protection for the entire Teshekpuk Lake Surface Protection Area. This incredible area provides critical habitat for molting geese from three countries and a vitally important herd of caribou harvested by Alaska Natives living on the North Slope. Scientific evidence shows the geese that gather to molt near Teshekpuk Lake are highly sensitive to disturbance, and BLM's proposal to reduce protection in this area to only 213,000 acres of goose molting habitat north of the lake is completely inadequate. A no-lease zone of only 213,000 acres also does little to protect the caribou that give birth to their calves and require a much larger area for their seasonal movements throughout the Teshekpuk Lake area seeking relief from insects.

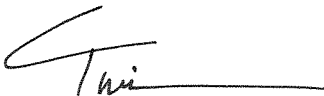
003
General

Eighty-seven percent of the northeastern Reserve is already open to oil and gas companies for leasing and about 1.4 million acres are under lease now. Although I do not oppose additional oil and gas development in the Reserve, there is no science indicating that the sensitive areas now closed to leasing can be opened safely. It would be a mistake to risk the internationally significant ecological resources of Teshekpuk Lake for short-term energy supplies, especially when we know that the United States cannot drill its way to energy independence.

4

I urge you to choose Alternative A, No Action, in the northeastern Reserve to protect its incredible value for birds and wildlife for future generations. Please make my comments part of the official record.

Sincerely,



Christian Timmerman